



UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT BRANCH
Washington, D.C. 20570

Via email

April 1, 2022

Re: FOIA Request NLRB-2022-000774

Dear Mr. Henry Houston (Eugene Weekly):

This is in response to your request, under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, received on March 15, 2022, in which you seek “documents related to” *United States Postal Service*, Case No. 19-CA-291992. You assumed financial responsibility for the processing of your request in the amount of \$37.00.

We acknowledged your request on March 15, 2022.

Your request is denied in part and granted in part, as explained below.

After conducting a search of the Agency’s electronic casehandling system, NxGen, I have determined that certain records responsive to your request are part of an investigative file in an open case before the Agency, and therefore, are exempt from disclosure pursuant to Exemption 7(A) of the FOIA. 5 U.S.C. § 552 (b)(7)(A). Exemption 7(A) allows an agency to withhold records included in an open investigatory file where disclosure could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings. *See NLRB v. Robbins Tire & Rubber Co.*, 437 U.S. 214, 236 (1978). Here, the requested case is open, pending an investigation in the Region, and as such, releasing any investigatory records in the case file at this time could interfere with the ongoing investigation. Therefore, given the open status of the case, the investigatory records are being withheld in full pursuant to Exemption 7(A).

Your request is granted to the extent that I have attached the formal records in the case, which are available to the public pursuant to NLRB FOIA regulations, which include the charge, docketing letters to the parties, and charged party notices of appearance. Upon my review, redactions have been made to portions of these records to protect the privacy interests of individuals named in the records. These redactions were made pursuant to FOIA Exemption 6, which pertains to information the release of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, and FOIA Exemption 7(C), which pertains to records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes, the

release of which could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6) and (b)(7)(C).

Please note that Exemption 7(A) protection is “temporal in nature.” *Citizens for Responsibility & Ethics in Wash. v. Dep’t of Justice*, 746 F.3d 1082, 1097 (D.C. Cir 2014) (citing *NLRB v. Robbins Tire*, 437 U.S. 214, 223-24 230-32 (1978)). As such, case file records may become disclosable, subject to applicable exemptions, after the case closes, that is, once a Board decision and/or court order issues, there has been full compliance with a settlement, or the case has otherwise been closed under Agency procedures. Accordingly, you may wish to file a new request at that time.

The status of this case can be tracked on the Agency website at www.nlr.gov by going to the Cases & Decisions tab, clicking case search, entering the case number in the search box and viewing the case page or by clicking the link here: <https://www.nlr.gov/case/19-CA-291992> For the purpose of assessing fees, we have placed you in Category A, commercial use requester. This category refers to requests “from or on behalf of a person who seeks information for a use or purpose that furthers the commercial, trade, or profit interests of the requester or the person on whose behalf the request is made, which can include furthering those interests through litigation.” NLRB Rules and Regulations, 29 C.F.R. § 102.117(d)(1)(v). Consistent with this fee category, you “will be assessed charges to recover the full direct costs of searching for, reviewing for release, and duplicating the records sought.” 29 C.F.R. § 102.117(d)(2)(ii)(A). Charges are \$9.25 per quarter-hour of professional time. 29 C.F.R. § 102.117(d)(2)(i).

For the purpose of assessing fees, we have placed you in Category C, as a representative of the news media, in that you qualify as a person “actively gathering news for an entity that is organized and operated to publish or broadcast news to the public.” NLRB Rules and Regulations, 29 C.F.R. § 102.117(d)(1)(vii). Accordingly, there is no charge assessed for this request.

Payment Instructions: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting widespread employee telework at the Agency’s Headquarters offices, we are no longer accepting checks or money orders as payment at this time. To submit payment for your FOIA request, please use www.pay.gov. From the www.pay.gov home page, scroll down to the bottom left corner to select “Pay a FOIA Request.” Click “See all options” and go to “Filter By Agency” to check the box for the National Labor Relations Board. Continue following instructions on the website. Please remember to include the Invoice Number, which is the NLRB FOIA Case No., and the amount you intend to pay. Further, please be advised that all FOIA payments must be paid in full before any future FOIA requests are processed.

You may contact Patrick Plummer, the Attorney-Advisor who processed your request, at 202-273-2999 or by email at patrick.plummer@nlrb.gov, as well as

the Agency's FOIA Public Liaison, for any further assistance and/or to discuss any aspect of your request. The FOIA Public Liaison, in addition to the Attorney-Advisor, can further explain responsive and releasable agency records, suggest agency offices that may have responsive records, and/or discuss how to narrow the scope of a request in order to minimize fees and processing times. The contact information for the Agency's FOIA Public Liaison is:

Kristine M. Minami
FOIA Public Liaison
National Labor Relations Board
1015 Half Street, S.E., 4th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20570
Email: FOIAPublicLiaison@nrlrb.gov
Telephone: (202) 273-0902
Fax: (202) 273-FOIA (3642)

After first contacting the Agency, you may additionally contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA dispute resolution services it offers. The contact information for OGIS is:

Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS
College Park, Maryland 20740-6001
Email: ogis@nara.gov
Telephone: (202) 741-5770
Toll free: (877) 684-6448
Fax: (202) 741-5769

You may obtain a review of this determination under the NLRB Rules and Regulations, 29 C.F.R. § 102.117(c)(2)(v), by filing an administrative appeal with the Division of Legal Counsel (DLC) through FOIAonline at:
<https://foiaonline.gov/foiaonline/action/public/home> or by mail or email at:

Nancy E. Kessler Platt
Chief FOIA Officer
National Labor Relations Board
1015 Half Street, S.E., 4th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20570
Email: DLCFOIAAppeal@nrlrb.gov

Any appeal must be postmarked or electronically submitted within 90 calendar days of the date of this letter. Any appeal should contain a complete statement of the reasons upon which it is based.

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Please be advised that contacting any Agency official (including the Attorney-Advisor, FOIA Officer, or the FOIA Public Liaison) and/or OGIS does not stop the 90-day appeal clock and is not an alternative or substitute for filing an administrative appeal.

Sincerely,

/s/ Synta E. Keeling

Synta E. Keeling
FOIA Officer

Attachment: (eight pages)